

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A document search system capable of instructing a document search by specifying a document database to be searched next among a plurality of document databases based on a search result of a document database, comprising a step of:

storing an associative search recording table recording the number of times  $x_{ij}$  of searching a document database  $j$  based on a search result of a document database  $i$ .

2. The document search system according to claim 1, further comprising a step of: changing a showing order of document databases to be searched by using said associative search recording table.

3. The document search system according to claim 1, wherein said associative search recording table is stored for each user, and, by using said associative search recording table for each user, a showing order of document databases to be searched is changed according to a user.

4. The document search system according to claim 1, further comprising a step of: calculating a registration fee of each document database by using said associative search recording table.

5. The document search system according to claim 4, wherein a registration fee is calculated according to a sum of the number of times of being a search origin for a document search and the number of times of being a search target for a document search.

6. A search server for mediating between a search client and a plurality of document databases, the search server being capable of instructing a document search by specifying a document database to be searched next among plurality of document databases based on a search result of a document database, and comprising:

search query analyzing means for analyzing a search query from said search client;

search query constructing means for sending the search query analyzed by said search query analyzing means to the document database specified by the search client;

means for sending a search result of said specified document database to said search client; and

associative search recording table storing means for storing an associative search recording table recording the number of times  $x_{ij}$  of

searching a document database j based on a search result of a document database i.

7. The search server according to claim 6, further comprising: showing order changing means for changing a showing order of document databases to be searched and to be shown to said search client by using said associative search recording table.

8. The search server according to claim 6, comprising said associative search recording table storing means which stores an associative search recording table for each user, and the showing order changing means for changing a showing order of document databases to be searched and to be shown to said search client according to a user by using said associative search recording table for each user.

9. The search server according to claim 6, wherein a registration fee of each document database is calculated by using said associative search recording table stored by said associative search recording table storing means.